



**helping homeless people,
help themselves**

To: Sen. Formica, Sen. Osten, Rep. Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee

Regarding: Preserving DOH Housing and Homelessness line item of \$73.7 million

From: Brian Baker, Assistant Director, South Park Inn

Date: February 17, 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before this committee concerning the preservation of the Department of Housing homeless and housing line item of 73.3 million dollars in the Governor's proposed budget. This line item is critical for frontline homeless services, outreach, emergency shelters, and the rental assistance program (RAP), which is essential to aiding those that have fallen into homelessness and poverty.

The South Park Inn, located at 75 Main St in Hartford, is on the frontline of sheltering people in their time of crisis. We are an essential service and a life line for those that find themselves homeless and in need of shelter. Since 1984, the South Park Inn has served the Greater Hartford community. We shelter 153 men, women and children nightly. We serve 85 men, women and children in the emergency shelter, 33 men in a transitional living program and an additional 35 men and women at Plimpton House, a 24 hour supportive housing program for the chronically homeless. These programs are often full to capacity every night.

Only half of our guests are from the city of Hartford. The majority of the remainder are residents of the Greater Hartford region. These are men, women and children who are without resources and enter shelter with little but a bag of belongings to their name. They are completely reliant on the shelter and its resources for their activities of daily living and well-being. We are proud to say that we have provided critical assistance to over 50,000 people since 1984.

The South Park Inn relies on the generosity of thousands of volunteers and donors annually. Churches, Synagogues, Universities, businesses and civic groups are essential in providing meals and services to those that we serve. We raise hundreds of thousands of dollars privately to help us improve the quality of life of the people that turn to us for help.

Without the DOH dollars that we receive annually, we would not be able to continue to shelter and offer so many emergency services to the community. In recent years, many shelter and transitional programs have closed leaving many communities little choice but to open temporary winter overflow shelter beds and warming centers. By preserving the Housing and Homeless line item the South Park Inn will be able to continue its mission in helping people achieve permanent housing, employment and entitlements.

Street Outreach ■ Emergency Shelter ■ Transitional Living ■ Supportive Housing

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